



*United States Attorney
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**NIGHTCLUB BOUNCER ADMITS TO FEDERAL CHARGE
OF TAKING PAYMENTS FOR ALLOWING SALE OF ECSTASY**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that JOSE HERNANDEZ, a former bouncer at Club Exit II in Manhattan, pled guilty late yesterday in Manhattan federal court to conspiring to distribute the drug commonly known as Ecstasy at Club Exit II. Specifically, HERNANDEZ acknowledged that, while employed as a bouncer at Club Exit II, he took payments from Ecstasy dealers in exchange for allowing the dealers to sell Ecstasy inside the club.

HERNANDEZ pled guilty to Count One of an Indictment that was returned against him on April 10, 2003. According to that charge, on multiple occasions in November and December 2002, HERNANDEZ was paid to help a co-conspirator smuggle Ecstasy pills into the night club where he worked so that the pills could be sold inside the club. According to the Indictment, on two other occasions in November 2002, HERNANDEZ was paid to help another

person who was actually an undercover law enforcement officer smuggle what HERNANDEZ was told were Ecstasy pills into the club.

HERNANDEZ, a resident of Brooklyn, New York, faces a maximum prison term of 20 years and a fine of up to \$1 million when he is sentenced. As part of his plea, HERNANDEZ agreed to forfeit his drug proceeds to the United States Government.

Club Exit II is located at 610 West 56th Street in Manhattan. The club was temporarily closed for several months in February 2003 as part of a nuisance abatement action filed by New York City because of narcotics sales that were occurring at the club.

Mr. COMEY praised the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, consisting of law enforcement officers of the New York City Police Department, New York State Police and the Drug Enforcement Administration, for their outstanding work and cooperation in this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys DAVID BERARDINELLI and BENJAMIN LAWSKY are in charge of the prosecution.